What is claimed is:

1. A hermetically sealed housing comprising:

opposing, substantially planar first and second housing members;

a compressive gasket seal compressed between the first and second housing members; and

a removeable compression limit spacer adjacent the gasket seal and between the first and second housing members, the compression limit spacer limiting said compression of the gasket seal to a predetermined compression level.

2. The housing of claim 1, wherein the gasket seal is nested within the peripheral extent of the compression limit spacer.

3. The housing of claim 1, wherein the gasket seal is contactingly supported by the compression limit spacer.

4. The housing of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of fasteners which apply a compressive force to the gasket seal.

5. The housing of claim 4, wherein the compression limit spacer comprises a plurality of discrete, spaced apart bosses through which the plurality of fasteners extend.

6. The housing of claim 1, wherein the gasket seal has a substantially hexagonal cross-sectional shape.

7. The housing of claim 1, wherein the gasket seal has a substantially c-shaped cross-sectional shape.

8. The housing of claim 1, wherein the first and second housing members, the compression limit spacer and the seal gasket all have a substantially common coefficient of thermal expansion.

9. The housing of claim 1, wherein the first and second housing members and the compressed gasket seal form an interior environment, and wherein an inert fluidic atmosphere is placed into said environment.

10. The housing of claim 9 characterized as a housing of a data storage device so that the housing further supports a data storage medium with the interior environment.

11. The housing of claim 1, wherein the compression limit spacer is characterized as a first compression limit spacer and the predetermined compression level is characterized as a first compression level, and wherein the housing is provided in combination with a second, replacement compression limit spacer which is used to replace the first compression limit spacer after the housing is opened, the second, replacement compression limit spacer having a thickness less than a thickness of the first compression limit spacer so that, upon installation of the second, replacement compression limit spacer, the gasket seal is compressed to a second compression level greater than the first compression level.

12. The housing of claim 1, wherein the first and second housing members, the compression limit spacer and the gasket seal are all formed of metal.

13. A hermetically sealed housing comprising:

opposing, substantially planar first and second housing members; and

means for establishing a hermetic seal between the first and second housing members and for limiting a compression force established by attachment of the first housing member to the second housing member.

14. In a hermetically sealed housing of the type comprising opposing, substantially planar first and second housing members and a peripherally extending, compressive gasket seal compressed between the first and second housing members to establish a hermetic seal between an interior of the housing and an exterior environment, the improvement characterized as the housing further comprising an essentially non-compressive compression limit spacer which limits said compression of the gasket seal to a predetermined compression level.

15. The improved housing of claim 14, wherein the gasket seal is nested within the peripheral extent of the compression limit spacer.

16. The improved housing of claim 14, wherein the gasket seal is contactingly supported by the compression limit spacer.

17. The improved housing of claim 14, wherein the compression limit spacer comprises a plurality of discrete, spaced apart bosses through which a plurality of fasteners extend.

18. The improved housing of claim 14, wherein housing retains an inert fluidic atmosphere.

19. The improved housing of claim 14 characterized as a housing of a data storage device so that the housing further supports a data storage medium with the interior environment.

20. The improved housing of claim 14, wherein the compression limit spacer is characterized as a first compression limit spacer and the predetermined compression level is characterized as a first compression level, and wherein the improvement further comprises a second, replacement compression limit spacer which is used to replace the first seal rentention ring after the housing is opened, the second, replacement compression limit spacer having a thickness less than a thickness of the first compression limit spacer so that, upon installation of the

second, replacement compression limit spacer, the gasket seal is compressed to a second compression level greater than the first compression level.